



SOCIOLOGY 316, 01W

Courtship/Mate Selections Marriage/Family Patterns

Summer 2014

ON-LINE COURSE SYLLABUS

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Office Hours: 1:00 -3:00 Wednesday—Note: it may be easiest by email. If we need to meet face-to-face I can be in my office whenever possible.

Course Information

I. Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Required Textbook: Benokraitis, *Marriages and Families: Changes, Choices and Constraints*, 7th Edition (2012). Pearson/Prentice Hall, ISBN: 10-205-00673-6.

Older editions of the book are not acceptable. You can purchase or rent the text or find it online, just make certain you have it in hand on the first day of class because we will start having assignments the first week of class.

II. Course Description:

Welcome to SOC 316 online. I am confident that we will have a productive semester in learning about the sociological perspective on marriage and family.

Your responsibilities in completing this course are stated below.

1. Because this is a Summer course it moves very quickly and is very important that you regularly consult the syllabus and any announcements that may be made on an as needed basis. Be sure that you read and follow all instructions about course objectives, grading procedures, etc. **Ignorance about details given in classes as well as in the course syllabus and various announcements posted on the eCollege web site cannot be accepted as an excuse. I urge that you FULLY understand course requirements, grading procedures, and details on exams and assignments.** That will be the key to doing well in the course. Also, please feel free to ask me questions about the course requirements through e-mails.
2. **Read instructions under each week carefully.** Your study guide (in terms of each chapter's learning objectives, overview summary, and guidance for succeeding in fulfilling the requirements) is given under weeks 1 to 5.
3. **It is important that you log in each week and use the study guide to complete work regularly.** You also should take weekly practice quizzes. Although they don't count point-wise they give you an idea of what you need to know to master the week's assignments and will help you to prepare for the course exams.
4. **All of your closed book exams and open-book practice weekly quizzes (as well as open-book essay assignments) will mainly be based on your text book. If you would like to use outside sources make sure they are academic (.edu) or governmental (.gov) sources. Note: Wikipedia isn't a good source. Anyone can add information to the site so there is a real chance that you can retrieve inaccurate information from this site.**
5. **You may introduce yourself to other students in the Student Lounge accessible to you at the home page of the course.**
6. **You can e-mail me whenever you have challenges or questions. Use the e-mail address given on the first page of this syllabus. I am inclined to forget to check the Virtual Office frequently so email is the best means of communication with me. In communicating with me always remember to**

include your name and the class you're in because I'm teaching two different online classes this summer.

- 7. I will post various discussion questions on a number of topics at various times during the course.** Be sure you log into discussions at the home page of the course and respond to questions during the allotted time. You will be able to earn bonus points for your participation in EACH discussion (up to 2 points for each week's topic) depending on how meaningful and analytical your responses are. These points can add up and will provide an opportunity to improve your grade in the course. Your score achieved in discussions will be calculated and added to your total score in two major exams. Your participation in discussions will enhance your chances of making higher grades. It is okay to disagree with each other on these topics, just be sure to avoid personal attacks or hurtful language.

REMEMBER THAT EACH WEEKLY DISCUSSION CAN ONLY BE RESPONDED TO DURING SPECIFIC DATES OF EACH WEEK IN ORDER TO EARN BONUS POINTS.

- 8. Read all announcements posted at the Home Page of the course.** If you have a problem with your e-mail system, please contact the Instructional Technology office. Do follow university deadlines in schedules (such as last date to drop the course) given at the university's website.

II. Course Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes

This is a general survey course in the American institution of marriage and family, particularly focused on mate selection and intimacy, gender issues, and marriage and family enrichment. You should read articles in journals related to marriage and family and relevant articles on the internet (be sure to limit them to .edu and .gov sources) while working on your open-book exam and other assignments. Through readings (text book, on-line materials, and other appropriate books/articles) and class discussions, we will pursue the following **course objectives**:

1. The course is intended to foster critical thinking from a sociological perspective regarding marriage and family issues and problems. It will help you to become familiar with the language and literature as well as the key ideas, concepts, theories, and issues commonly associated with discourse on marriage and family relations in the United States.

2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the American institution of marriage and family in a comparative, global perspective by examining examples of the institution in other nations in Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America.
3. The course will require that students can identify and analyze various sociological principles, theories and concepts relevant to marriage and family.
4. Students will demonstrate critical issues relevant to crises in the institution of marriage and family, including ones such as mate selection, communication problems, problems of conflict and violence, and seriousness of the rising divorce rate.
5. Students will explore and develop problem solving skills to both macro and micro issues as related to marriage and family.

The learning outcome assessment for the goals stated above will be based on exams, weekly discussions, and essay assignments to insure:

1. That you have adequately learned basic concepts relevant to marriage and family in human society;
2. That you fully understand the origin and forms of various issues involving marriage and family; and
3. That you have developed a critical thinking grasp of various sociological theories explaining marriage and family problems and issues.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

Grading will be based upon a total of 300 points accumulated from 2 exams each worth 150 points, and essay assignments worth a total of 10 points. Details on all requirements and grading procedures are stated below:

At the end of the course an "A" will be equal to 90+, a "B" will be equal to 80-89, a "C" 70-79, and a "D" 60-69 of the total points out of the grand total.

A. Weekly Practice Quizzes:

There will be weekly practice quizzes (not required and not graded), though strongly recommended) to help you prepare for the exams.

Each quiz on-line will be based on the reading assigned each week, and will consist of 30 multiple-choice questions. You will be allowed to retake a quiz as many times as you want since these quizzes are only for practice. **However, some of the questions in the required exams may be based on questions in various quizzes. I urge you to take them seriously.**

Practice Quizzes are NOT restricted by any dates. You can take them any time during the semester. However, take them before each exam so they may help you prepare for the exams. They are strictly a way of preparing you for the kind of material that might be on the exams.

Calculation of final grade

Your final grade will be based on the following procedures given under B & C (although practice quizzes should help to enhance your performance, and weekly discussions will provide you bonus points) :

B. Closed-Book Exams (a total of 300 points):

There will be three major exams. You will be required to take two out of the three exams. If you take all three of them, I will drop the lowest score. Each exam will constitute 150 points for the final grade. There will be no make-up exam.

Dates for the three exams are given below (each exam will be available on-line starting past midnight each day and it closes at midnight on the same day it is scheduled):

- ❖ **Exam 1 consisting of 75 objective questions worth 150 points based on Chapters 1 to 6 available on-line on Thursday of Week 2, July 17th. YOU WILL HAVE 90 MINUTES TO COMPLETE THE EXAM. YOU WILL BE**

LOGGED OUT OF THE EXAM AFTER 90 MINUTES, SO TIME YOURSELF CAREFULLY.

- ❖ **Exam 2 consisting of 75 objective questions worth 150 points based on chapters 6 through 12 on Thursday, July 31 . YOU WILL HAVE 90 MINUTES TO COMPLETE THE EXAM ON-LINE. YOU WILL BE LOGGED OUT OF THE EXAM AFTER 90 MINUTES. SO TIME YOURSELF CAREFULLY.**
- ❖ **A Final exam consisting of 75 objective questions worth 150 points based on all chapters (1 to 15) available on Thursday, August 7. YOU WILL HAVE 90 MINUTES TO COMPLETE THE EXAM. YOU WILL BE LOGGED OUT OF THE EXAM AFTER 90 MINUTES. SO TIME YOURSELF CAREFULLY.**

If you have already taken the first two exams, you do not have to take the comprehensive final. However, if you are taking it to improve a low score on one of the first two exams; it can only help you and will not bring your grade down even if you fail it. The final will be required if you have missed one of the first two exams. If you missed both of the first two exams, you must drop the course by the university deadline for dropping to avoid receiving a failing grade in the course.

- ❖ *All exams will be closed-book.*
- ❖ You should write dates for exams on your calendar. I will not be able to change dates for any students. Since I have already allowed flexibility to you by dropping one exam, you should do fine.
- ❖ You will be logged out of each exam after the maximum allowed time. Do not take any break. Once you start the exam, you must complete it in one sitting. It may be a good idea if you take the exam at one of the computer centers on the Commerce, Metroplex or Navarro campuses particularly if your computer is older or if you might get disrupted at home. We cannot control circumstances if your personal computer freezes or has other technical problems. So time yourself carefully and make sure that no one will distract you while taking the exam.
- ❖ It is your responsibility if you log out of the exam unless you are taking it in one of the computer labs in Commerce or other campuses stated above and the person supervising the computer lab can certify that the technical

problem was unavoidable. Please call the Help Desk and you may e-mail me immediately if that happens giving the name, phone #, and/or e-mail address of the person in charge of the computer lab. I will then let you know what needs to be done.

❖ **HOW TO DO WELL ON ESSAY QUESTIONS IN ALL EXAMS/ASSIGNMENTS/DISCUSSIONS:**

I want you to do well in answering essay questions in weekly discussions as well as in the open-book essays assignment. The essay questions may not only help you to improve your scores but they represent critical thinking on your part on serious questions. I encourage all of you to do your best on essay questions.

If you lose some points in any essay, read the comments I write when I return the assignment grade.

Please be aware that there are no extra credit assignments in this course. You must work your hardest to excel in the course.

C. OPEN BOOK ESSAY ASSIGNMENT: Developing Essays to Discuss Issues Related to the Sociology of Marriage and Family (50 points allocated to this assignment):

- ❖ Please read each essay question carefully to understand what is involved in applying appropriate sociological concepts and in addressing issues in each essay. **If you include your own comments make sure they are supported by evidence. Avoid unsupported opinions.** This is an open-book assignment. Consult your book and other sources stated above in thoroughly addressing each essay question. Be sure to list references used at the end of each essay. **Be sure to give relevant examples where possible.**
- ❖ Your essay assignment is due on **Thursday, August 7th by 5 PM** . Late submissions will not be accepted. Upload your answers to the drop box.
- ❖ Please start developing your notes on this exam right away. Do not simply copy essays from any source. Give your own interpretation of ideas, including

your own **well informed**, opinions, and **supportive evidence** to get maximum credit for the assignment.

ANSWER ANY 5 OUT OF 7 QUESTIONS GIVEN BELOW. ALL QUESTIONS CARRY EQUAL WEIGHT. FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES FOR ANSWERING QUESTIONS. EACH QUESTION IS WORTH A TOTAL OF TEN POINTS.

1. Define intimacy and love. What are traits of each of them? How may we 'measure' or 'assess' intimacy or love in a marriage? Why does intimacy in marriage decline over a period of time in Western civilization?
2. In what ways and to what extent do problems related to violence exist in marriage and family? Why do we have family violence? What can we do to minimize its negative impacts?
3. How do people select a mate for marriage in contemporary society? Why has this process become so complex? What steps may be taken to improve the mate selection process in our culture?
4. What are some of the factors that can explain why people divorce? What is the divorce process and what can be done to help couples from avoiding extreme steps such as the termination of a relationship?
5. Some people say that the institution of marriage is dying. Do you agree? What is the future of marriage and family in America? What are optimistic and pessimistic signs for that?
6. Some people say that the male is the dominant sex in human society. Is the male the 'superior' sex? Why or why not? What is the impact of increasing female employment on the institution of marriage and family?
7. Given what you have learned in the class how do you foresee the future of the U.S. family? Please be explicit and rely on what you have learned in the text and lectures

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

My goal is to guide each of you to succeed in the learning process in this course. I will be objective, professional, and nurturing in my approaches as your professor-.

Although we will not meet as a class, I will be available to interact with each of you and guide you to do your best in the course.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

- ❖ “All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.” (See Student’s Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).
- ❖ **A Note on Academic Honesty:** Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must work to provide an environment in which each student has the opportunity to be evaluated fairly on the basis of his/her own performance. University regulations regarding academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. At a minimum, any student found to be in violation of university rules will receive a failing grade on the exam or assignment involved. ALL instances of academic dishonesty may be reported to both the Department Head as well as the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. These offices may also wish to evaluate the case and decide punishment independent of this professor’s actions. I will use the technology to scan your answers and discussions to determine if anyone has copied contents from other students, on-line sources, and from published works. No credit will be given to anyone for giving or taking help toward any form of plagiarism beside punitive action in serious cases. While I trust my students, precautions are needed to protect those who genuinely work on the course.

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library

Room 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

CALENDAR CONTAINING DATES FOR YOUR BONUS-POINTS DISCUSSIONS, AND REQUIRED EXAMS & ASSIGNMENTS

(Practice quizzes are not listed. Take as many of them as possible for chapters assigned for each exam.)

Week 1: July 7-10: Read Chapters 1 through 3 and complete Discussion one by Thursday, 7/10 at 5 p.m.

Week 2: July 14-17: Read Chapters 4 through 6 and Discussion 2.

EXAM I, Thursday, July 17—Chapters 1 through 6

Week 3: July 21-24: Chapters 7 through 9, work on Discussion 3.

Week 4: July 28-31: Chapters 10 through 12 work on Discussion 4.

EXAM II, Thursday, July 31st Chapters 7 through 12

Week 5: August 4-7: Chapters 13 through 15, work on Discussion 5.

Take OPTIONAL FINAL EXAM, covering chapters 1 through 15, on Thursday, August 7.

Turn in OPEN BOOK ESSAY QUESTION ASSIGNMENT, THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 50 POINTS by 5 PM.